

Talking Points
Welcome
Southern Growth Policies Board
Biloxi, Mississippi
Monday, June 8, 2009

- As chairman of the Southern Growth Policies Board, I want to welcome you to today's event, "Southern Energy: Abundant, Affordable, American."
 - o *About SGPB:* The Southern Growth Policies Board was founded back to the 1970's by the region's governors as a means to promote regional economic development. Today, the board functions as a unique public-private partnership that focuses on the major drivers for economic development in the South – innovation and technology; globalization; the workforce; and the vital role of the community. I am proud to serve as their chairman, and proud of the work being done.
- Your attendance at this conference indicates your interest in one of the foremost policy issues at the state, regional, and national level: Energy.
- I often tell people that as long as I'm Governor, my policy for Mississippi is: "More energy." But there's a disconnect between "more energy" and the "right energy"; indeed, there is a cultural misconception that we can't have more of the right energy, without sacrificing our national security or maintaining a healthy national economy.
- What's the right energy? Energy that is *affordable*; energy that is *abundant*; and most importantly, energy that is *American*.
- Today, I am especially pleased to host this conference, Southern Energy, because I believe our message is one that needs to be heard. Whether you're from right here in Mississippi or from one of our sister states, you deserve to hear an open, honest discussion on Southern Energy – not only what we can do, but what we can't do, in terms of sustaining an energy policy that promotes national security and a strong American economy.

- And we've got just the right people to do it. Industry experts from across the spectrum – from oil and gas, to nuclear; from wind to solar – will share their thoughts on America's energy portfolio.
- I'm grateful to Governors Beebe, Bredesen, Manchin, and Perdue for joining me in this effort. We'll hear from our Governors' Panel later today. For some of you, this might be the first – but hopefully, not the last – time you get to experience what we like to think of as the true Mississippi experience: our famous hospitality, delicious cuisine, and homegrown Blues.
- Again, I'd like to welcome you to the 2009 Southern Energy Conference. Let's get started... (transition into first session – "A Southern Energy Overview")